

# 託 され た バ ト ン

— 特別書きおろし番外編 —

Takusareta  
baton





## The Passed Baton



A flame flickered on a candlewick inside the dim shrine. That single source of light shined upon a group of people sitting in a circle within the darkness.

Those gathered were primarily Shinto priests belonging to the Taisha (Amnesty). Ones with particularly high influence at that.

And yet those high-ranking priests were not the ones in charge here. That honor fell upon a mere middle school girl-- Uesato Hinata.

Hinata was the one who gathered the priests today, saying she had extremely important business with them.

And they were tense.

By successfully guiding the sole surviving hero, Nogi Wakaba, Uesato Hinata had gained immense influence. Furthermore, she had recently been gaining even more power within the Taisha by rallying several other prominent miko, starting with Aki Masuzu.

Having the highest authority as a miko, the girl sat calmly in the formal seiza position with her eyes closed, not at all intimidated by the adults surrounding her. Her silent posture commanded a reverent silence throughout the shrine, with an air of gravitas that weighed down on the priests. They were completely subjugated by the dignity of a girl far younger than they.

Placed before each priest was a bundle of papers.

The flickering candle flame.

The breathtaking silence.

The overwhelming gravity.

The priests looked at the miko, waiting for her words.

Eventually, Uesato Hinata slowly opened her eyes--

And began to speak.

- "Now then, please read the first page of the proposal. Today we will discuss proposed methods to bring about new innovations and updates to the hero system, entitled the "Founding Hero Motivation Project". Please continue to the second page."

In accordance with Hinata's words, the priests solemnly flipped the pages on the proposals placed before them.

At the same time, a presentation slideshow projected onto a screen before them.

Some of the more elderly priests gasped in awe at the animated text filling the screen as they were unfamiliar with computers.

Hinata continued with an outline of the project.

- "This project will commit great efforts to maintain the mental health of the heroes--"

Two days prior.

- "A plan to strengthen the hero system...?"

Hinata was in Wakaba's room to clean her ears for her when Wakaba came up with suggestions regarding the hero system. "Yeah, I was thinking it would be worth it if we could help out any future heroes, even if just a little. And I'm not just talking about simple firepower enhancements here. I'm talking about adding mental health support systems, too."

Hinata was in Wakaba's room to clean her ears for her when Wakaba came up with suggestions regarding the hero system.

- "Yeah, I was thinking it would be worth it if we could help out any future heroes, even if just a little. And I'm not just talking about simple firepower enhancements here. I'm talking about adding mental health support systems, too."

A hero's fight was not just physical, but mental as well. Heroes may be physically superhuman, but mentally, they were normal girls. Sensitive, fragile, breakable. The underlying cause of Chikage's tragedy was in fact her emotional defenselessness.

- "Mental health support... That would indeed be desirable if possible."

The mind is a complex thing. If you asked a thousand psychologists how to maintain a healthy mind, you very well may receive a thousand answers.





- "I don't have any concrete ideas on what that would entail either, but... I do have a small suggestion. Let's see. How about this? When you transform, you can hear my voice no matter where you are."

- " ...!"

Upon hearing that suggestion, Hinata's body froze, and she stopped cleaning Wakaba's ear for a second.

- "... If I could hear Wakaba-chan's voice from anywhere, that would be a little -too- wonderful."

- "I know, right!? We can use recordings of all the heroes' voices, too."

- "That sounds nice! I know it would boost my strength at least a hundredfold. And it's just voice playback, so I'm sure it's possible."

- "Alright! Then let's get to it!"

- "S-so... Wakaba-chan... Exactly what sort of things will you say?"

Hinata looked at Wakaba with expectant eyes.

After quite a long period of careful consideration, Wakaba gave her triumphant reply:

- "'Don't give up!' 'Get up!' 'You can do this!' You know, a bunch of positive things over and over!"

Hinata's eyes gleamed at Wakaba's words.

- "Oh my, that's so wonderful...!"

- "I know, right!?"

- "I'm sure it'll motivate the future heroes so much that nothing can defeat them!"

- "Yeah, yeah! It's a good idea if I do say so myself!"

- "Let's quickly get it proposed to the Taisha! We can write up the proposal right now! We can do it overnight! Let's pull an all-nighter to get this proposal done!"

The two girls worked up a storm.

Hinata began drafting the proposal on her computer, and by the next morning, they had produced a proposal with dozens of pages. And without a wink of sleep in-between, she left Marugame Castle and headed to the Taisha.

Meanwhile, Wakaba thought about what sort of words to leave for the heroes of tomorrow, concentrating as seriously as she would while training.

Meanwhile, Wakaba thought about what sort of words to leave for the heroes of tomorrow, concentrating as seriously as she would while training.

And now, Hinata was giving their presentation to the Taisha priests.

After finishing the last page of the proposal, Hinata bowed her head.

- "And that is my proposal. I declare this to be a quintessential element to add to the grand design of the hero system. Thank you for your consideration."

The next day, Hinata returned to Marugame Castle.

With an extremely disappointed look on her face.

- "They rejected it..."

- "WHAT!? Why!?"

Wakaba had already handwritten fifty pages of words to record for the heroes of the future. She was planning to record words of encouragement for several different situations: "For your first battle" "For when you're winning" "For when you use abilities" "For when you strike an enemy through an opening" "For when you're scared of a powerful enemy" "For when you start to hate others" "For when you're sad" "For when you're hungry" and so forth.

- "They said... you wouldn't be able to concentrate if you kept hearing voices throughout the battle."



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- "Ugh...! Well, that may be true..."

- "And that those chosen as heroes should at least be able to fight without such encouragement in the first place."

- "Mgh..."

Not even Wakaba had anything to refute that point.

She sighed.

- "Whew... Well, nothing we can do about that. Just let it go, I guess."

- "No!! There is no need for us to let it go!"

Hinata leaned forward in a shout.

- "The proposal may have been rejected, but there's nothing inherently wrong about a system for founding heroes to support their successors! When I first heard your suggestion, everything just seemed to click!"

- "Whoa, you think so too, Hinata!?"

- "Of course. So that's where I came up with a plan that could quite come in handy."

- "... What sort of plan?"

Wakaba curiously asked.

Basking in the intense gaze of her childhood friend, Hinata cleared her throat.

- "The fairy system, Wakaba-chan. The fairy system."

Wakaba's eyes widened.

- "But I thought they were removing that function since it was dangerous to let fairies into your body, right?"

- "That's right. But if we used artificial... that is, pseudo-fairies, there'd be no harm done, don't you think?"

Wakaba quickly caught on to what Hinata was implying.

- "I get it! So I can become a fairy like Yoshitsune, huh? I see, I see. That way I can always keep fighting alongside the future heroes!"

Wakaba imagined what she'd look like as a fairy. That said, not even the heroes themselves could see the fairies, so she simply imagined it. She pictured herself as something of a graceful guardian spirit watching over the future heroes at their side.

... Of course, Wakaba was unaware of the mascot-like appearance "fairies" would take approximately 300 years later.

- "Mmm, that could be cool! And it'll reassure the future heroes I fight alongside too. They'll know they're not alone. Alright, let's do this!"

- "Um, I'm sorry, but there's no sort of technique to become a fairy like what you're thinking of."

- "Mgh, I see..."

The immediate rejection saddened Wakaba once more.

- "But creating a pseudo-fairy might be possible. Not a fairy with any abilities or anything, but more like a video image that you can replay."

- "Replay...?"

- "Try to recall all your battles so far. The accumulation of impurities from the fairies brought about negative voices and images, right? But a pseudo-fairy of Wakaba-chan would bring about positive voices and images."

- "So... just voices and images, huh?"

- "Yes. That's probably all that's possible."

- "But... If that's all, won't it still get in the way during battle?"



Hinata smiled and replied.

- "That's why we'll limit it to only during times it won't get in the way. Like when a hero succumbs to an enemy's psychological attack. Or when a hero becomes emotionally ill due to battle. During times like those, your pseudo-fairy will appear and encourage them."

- "That way it won't become a nuisance in battle, huh."

- "Indeed. I'm sure that the sudden appearance of your pseudo-fairy will be a big impact on heroes in times like those. ... Well, I could say it's like those yokai that get into your head, but that'd be mean."

- "That's way too mean!"

Hinata smiled and said "It's a joke" to try and calm down Wakaba's anger. Obviously, Wakaba understood it was a joke, but that didn't make her any less mad. That was just how those two got along.

- "But before you get any hopes up, Wakaba-chan, I want you to make sure you understand that this is little more than a motivational recording of you. I do believe it'll work as a warm encouragement, but that's all it is, and nothing more. There's no guarantee that your voice and images will all get through to them. It may even be nothing more than abstract images... In the end, it's still up to each heartbroken hero herself to get back up on her own."

Wakaba nodded.

- "Fine by me. If there's even the slightest chance I can help... then I'll take it."

And thus, the Wakaba Pseudo-Fairy Project was set into motion, even gaining Taisha approval. Some Taisha members expressed doubt at the plan's efficacy, but Hinata stood her ground and kept vying for approval.

The next day after receiving Taisha approval, Hinata went to the Marugame Castle classroom, but Wakaba had yet to arrive. Usually, Wakaba would arrive first and prepare the chalk for the blackboard and water the flower vases.

Hinata sat in her seat and surveyed the classroom.

Now, only she and Wakaba attended. And yet the number of desks remained the same. Six.

A six student classroom.

Even if they had passed away, they were still classmates.

- "Wakaba isn't here yet! Tama's first!"

- "I'm sorry, Tamacchi-sempai... but Hinata-san got here before you."

- "Gaahh!"

- "It's okay, Tama-chan. There's always tomorrow!"

- "That's too naive, Takashima-san... There's always tomorrow... I'll do it tomorrow... Tomorrow for sure... When you say things like that, tomorrow never comes..."

- "Don't jinx it! Tama's gonna be the first one here tomorrow for sure!"

Hinata felt as if she could still hear voices like that.

She sat spacing out in the classroom alone.

Eventually ten, fifteen minutes passed.

- "... That's strange..."

Homeroom was about to start, but Wakaba hadn't arrived yet. Not even in elementary school had such a thing ever happened. Hinata started to get worried.

Now that she thought about it, she hadn't seen Wakaba in the cafeteria this morning either. At the time, she assumed Wakaba had gone to school early so she didn't think much of it.

Hinata hadn't seen her once since they said goodnight last night. It had already been over ten hours since then.

Anything could've happened within that time.



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Could a sudden Vertex attack have occurred? During Vertex invasions, Hinata wouldn't even realize the heroes were fighting.

What if Wakaba fought alone, and perished--?

No, forget about a Vertex attack. Wakaba could have just suddenly fallen ill. She could've fallen ill and suddenly died in her sleep.

She could've fallen ill and collapsed, unable to speak and then--

Or what if she got into some sort of accident? Wakaba sometimes spaces out, so maybe she fell asleep in the bath and--

Death through battle. Death by illness. Death by accident. Death by all sorts of unexpected events.

People die all too easily.

-"...!!!"

Hinata leapt out of her seat and ran towards the classroom entrance.

(No, no, no, no, no, no, no!! I can't lose Wakaba-chan too...!!)

Why did she leave Wakaba-chan last night? She should've stayed with her. She shouldn't have let her out of her sight.

Yuuna passed away. Chikage passed away. Tamako passed away. Anzu passed away. They all passed away. In one short year, four of them were dead.

If she lost Wakaba too... she'd be all alone.

And if she were all alone, she wouldn't know... if she'd have the will to live anymore.

-"Wakaba-cha--"

-"Uwahh!"

The moment Hinata opened the classroom door, she found Wakaba standing right there before her. Wakaba seemed quite surprised. Perhaps she was just about to open the door herself.

-"What's wrong, Hinata? You look so pale."

-"Wa... Wakaba-chan..."

Wakaba didn't notice the quivering in Hinata's voice.

-"Thank goodness, I'm still on time, huh. I was so busy thinking about what to tell the heroes of the future that I couldn't sleep last night. So I woke up late."

-"Ugh, ughhh... uwaaaaahhhhhh!!!"

Hinata clung to Wakaba and started crying.

-"H-hey, Hinata? What's wrong...?"

Wakaba looked bewildered by the sudden development.

-"I can't-- I can't help it...! Wakaba-chan... you... weren't coming, so I... I... \*sniff\* I thought I lost... I thought I lost you too... uwaaaahhh!!!"

-"Hinata..."

Wakaba watched, somewhat surprised, as Hinata clung to her in tears.

Hinata had always seemed to be in control of her emotions. After Anzu and Tamako were killed, and when Chikage died, and when Yuuna died... she may have grieved in private, but she would never break down like this in the presence of others. Since she herself could not fight, she tried to at least act strong so as to not make those around her more depressed.

That's why both Wakaba and the adults around them had thought... that Uesato Hinata was a mature girl who remained calm no matter what.







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But there was no way that was true.

She lost Anzu and Tamako.

She lost Chikage.

She lost Yuuna.

One by one, her friends died.

Anxiety. Fear. Sadness.

Anxiety. Anxiety. Anxiety.

Everything precious to her was there one day and gone the next.

Hinata had come to fear even the most trivial of things. And that was why her anxiety exploded, causing her to think "Four of my friends are dead! And there's no guarantee that more won't die, too!" and driving her to cry like a child.

- "Ugh, \*sniff\*... uugh..."

- "... I'm sorry. I must have worried you."

Wakaba gently stroked Hinata's head.

- "That's right... \*sniff\* you made me... worry..."

- "It's okay. I'm not going anywhere. I'm beside you always."

- "Yes... please stay with me... always..."

- "Yeah. We'll be together forever. Even after we graduate. Even after we grow up. Even after we're old ladies, we'll be together."

- "Promise... Promise...!"

- "I promise."

Wakaba patted Hinata on the head until she stopped crying.

After school that day, Wakaba and Hinata went to the broadcast room to record the message for the heroes of the future. Wakaba's voice data would later be handed to the Taisha for spiritual processing to be added into the hero system.

Wakaba sat in proper seiza position in front of a microphone attached to a computer. Hinata sat in front of the computer to operate the recording software.

- "Man, that's the first time I've seen you cry that much, Hinata."

- "...! Please don't bring that up again. It's embarrassing..."

Hinata blushed as she tapped away at the computer.

- "We should take a picture too, huh. Then again, you're always taking pictures of me, so--"

- "Wakaba-chan? You're making me mad, you know?"

Hinata spoke with a smile.

- "... I'm sorry."

Wakaba's instincts told her to back off on that subject.

Wakaba cleared her throat and turned to the microphone.

- "... It's been a while since I've used this microphone. I used it almost every day back when we had a connection with Shiratori-san."

It made her feel a little bit lonely.

- "That's true... It feels like so long ago."



No matter how much time passes, it hurts to think about dead friends. Immersing in this sadness can bring back a sweet sentimentality.

But you must never let the past consume you.

- "For as long as we live, we must never stop going forward... Right, Wakaba-chan?"

- "Yeah, that's right."

Hinata finished setting up the recording software, finishing preparations.

- "Now please face the microphone and start."

- "Okay..."

Wakaba began to speak with an ever so slightly strained face.

- "Greetings, fellow heroes of the future. I am Nogi Wakaba, a hero shouldering her duty in 2019 of the Common Era-- or rather-- the first year of the Divine Era. You may be living decades, or even centuries after me, but I entrust my hopes of the future to you.

Ever since the day the Vertexes first arrived, many things were stolen from us. To regain them, we stood up against our ferocious foes, and fought.

The first to fight were Shiratori Utano and Fujimori Mito.

Next came us. Takashima Yuuna, Koori Chikage, Doi Tamako, Iyojima Anzu, Uesato Hinata, and Nogi Wakaba.

Now in the first year of the Divine Era, Shikoku has been relieved from the war. But from the time I record this message to the time you hear it, many battles against the Vertexes may or may not have occurred. Many heroes may or may not have been born.

How many, if any, I do not know.

But what I do know, is that at times, all heroes feel fear. Anxiety. Pain... Sometimes we question what we're really fighting for. If we're really protecting what we want to protect.

The heroes of our generation didn't start from scratch. Shiratori Utano handed us the baton.

And one day, we'll pass that baton to the next generation.

And they'll hand it to the next generation. And the next. And the next. And the next, next, next generation. And the next, next, next, next generation. Generation after Generation, time after time, no matter how long it takes... we'll keep passing that baton, I'm sure.

And the name of that baton... is 'Courage'. It's also known 'Hope'. And 'Prayer'.

Here in the present, I can do nothing for you in the future. Nothing but send you this voice of mine.

But I want you to believe. Standing behind you are all the heroes who've passed the baton before you.

I want you to look around. Standing beside you are all the friends and family who have spent time with you.

I want you to know that you are not alone. You are never alone.

You're probably suffering right now. I know. You're in pain. You're in sadness. You're in despair... It may seem as if no matter how hard you try, try, and try again, you still can't make it through. It's tough, I know. But that's exactly why you should be hearing my voice right now.

What I want to tell you isn't "fight harder" or "try harder".

It's... "live".

Please, just live.

If there's anyone precious to you, I want you to think of them, and get up. I want you to remember that if you give up on living now, it'll make them sad.

I've lost so many precious friends myself. So please, don't make your precious ones go through the same thing I did. Swear to me-- swear to them-- that you'll make it back--"

Wakaba took a deep breath and smiled in contentment.

- "It was a little long, but I think I said everything I wanted to say."



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- "Tee hee hee. You're not just leaving behind a hero system. You've added the perfect spice to it."

- "... Yeah. I want to make the system as strong as possible for the heroes of the future."

- "Indeed. But advancing ambitions while deceiving the enemy takes the utmost caution. Remember that simply strengthening the foundations will take an extraordinary amount of time... If you're not careful, it could put everything on hold."

If the heavenly gods found out that the hero system still existed and attacked in retaliation, everything would be for naught.

- "I know. I heard it'll be a long, drawn out research period. There's no need to add any more features than this."

- "Right. What's most important is increasing basic firepower."

- "There's no need to rush. Let's fortify our foundation as we go."

No matter how long it took, they would leave the future with a fighting chance-- that was what Wakaba and Hinata swore.

- "Hey, Wakaba-chan. Sometimes I let a 'demon' possess me too."

- "Huh, what?"

- "Heheh, just as a figure of speech, though. Sometimes those who manage organizations have to play devil's advocate and do things we don't necessarily agree with. Like erasing things from the record-- even important things."

Hinata spoke as if she were trying to persuade herself to do something.

And Wakaba immediately knew what that was.

- "... You mean Chikage...?"

- "Yes. Her record... will be erased. If we keep defending her, it'll be hard for us to move around within the Taisha..."

- "... That's quite a political assessment."

Even as she said that, Wakaba felt a deep sense of self-resentment for allowing such a situation to develop in the first place.

- "... I'm sorry... There was... no other way..."

Hinata hung her head and squeezed out those words.

- "The Taisha's influence is immense. ... But it's not as if everyone in the organization is a saint. And I'm sure some will be exposed... for abusing their authority. We cannot let such people have access to the Taisha's true authority. I must find a way to maneuver through the Taisha's ranks and protect its health as an organization..."

The organization known as the "Grand Shrine" Taisha was reborn as the "Amnesty" Taisha. Personnel reductions and shrine remodeling and reconstructions were to follow, and its influence as an organization would probably grow. The Taisha was changing. And there was no guarantee that it would be free of corruption.

Hinata remembered the diary they had found underground in Osaka. A tragedy caused by selfishness like that-- must never happen again.

Wakaba looked at Hinata's determined face and nodded.

- "This'll be hardest on you, won't it...? I'm counting on you."

- "Okay. But let's at least leave Chikage-san's name somewhere. The name 'Chikage' seems pretty versatile, after all."

- "... Yeah."

Hinata and Wakaba left Marugame Castle and headed back to the dorm.

The rose madder curtain of the sunset coated the city peeking out from the inner citadel.

Hinata looked up at the sky.

Shikoku was at peace again today. The sky spread out as far as the eye could see.

Hinata raised her hand towards the sky.

But it was too high for anyone to reach with their hand.



- "We humans live on the earth, under the gaze of heaven above... We may be weak, but that's why we never give up."

Wakaba smiled.

- "Yeah. We've got a long, long battle ahead of us, but let's take it one step at a time. Hinata, as long as you're with me, I can keep going forward forever. Just as I always have."

- "Me too", Hinata replied with a smile.

- "Thanks, Hinata. Thanks for everything... and for everything to come."

- "I should be thanking you. We did promise to be together forever. Besides, no matter how difficult a goal may seem, you're likely to succeed if you try."

And thus came a close to the Common Era.

The war with the Vertexes reached a temporary armistice, but the heroes' and miko's fight continue--

Fall 300 DE

The members of the Sanshu Middle School Hero Club were all helping out Nogi Sonoko sort through her books at home. Sonoko had a large quantity of books delivered from her parent's house as research material for her novel writing.

Among those books, they had discovered a book entitled "Hero Record".

- "No...gi... Wa...ka..ba... Is she my ancestor~? If she wrote a hero record, then does that mean my ancestor's a hero?"

- "Sonocchi's ancestor wrote a hero record. Or rather, as her descendant, Sonocchi's the one who wrote a record with the same name, right?"

- "So there were heroes already that far back in the past, huh... This can't be a prank, either... What a surprise, huh, Yuuna?"

- "..."

Even when Fuu addressed her, Yuuna said nothing. She was too busy staring holes into the photo of Nogi Wakaba pasted onto the last page of the Hero Record.

- "Yuuna, what's wrong?"

When called out to a second time, Yuuna finally snapped back and started talking.

- "I feel like... I've met this Nogi Wakaba... somewhere before."

- "Huh? But she lived centuries ago?"

Fuu furrowed her eyebrows dubiously. Yuuna seemed unsure herself as she wracked her brains trying to remember with a "Hmmm..."

- "... Oh yeah! You guys remember when I lost consciousness during that last battle? I felt like I met her then... or she called out to me... or something...? Mmm, it's hard to explain it."

Yuuna gave a troubled smile.

- "She called out to you? ... Perhaps the honorable hero of the past was encouraging you?"

Tougou looked at the photo of Nogi Wakaba.

A hero of the past encouraging a hero of the future--

It seemed like an illogical dream, but heroes had logic-defying power in the first place. In that case... perhaps such an occurrence was more plausible than it might have seemed.

- "That's sounds kind of dramatic."

Itsuki said with a fascinated look on her face.

- "Itsuki does like those sorts of stories, huh" her older sister teased, causing the younger sister to blush just a little.

- "Let's try reading a bit more."





Tougou turned the pages with a serious look on her face.

The other five peeked at the book too.

- "These pages are all blotted out, huh... Ah, there's still some text around here. Looks like the record wasn't written by just one person, huh."

Karin pointed out some of the pages as they flipped through them.

What appeared to be a list of names had escaped censorship.

- "Doi Tamako... Iyojima Anzu... Takashima Yuuna... Huh, Yuuna-chan?"

Tougou looked back and forth between Yuuna and the book.

- "She has the same name as me... Is that a coincidence?"

- "No, I don't think it's just a coincidence~"

- "Huh?"

All eyes fell on Sonoko.

- "Well~ long ago, I heard that the name 'Yuuna' was special. Ever since long ago, babies have been given that name if they do a li~ttle something like this~ when they're born~"

Sonoko knocked her hands together in some sort of gesture.

- "...? So a baby just has to do that by coincidence while playing...? Seems like a sort of good omen, or something."

- "Yeah, yeah, that's exactly it~ Nibosshi~, you're so smart~"

Infants who perform a special action at birth are bestowed with the name of a hero of the past-- perhaps as a good omen, indeed.

- "So the name 'Yuuna' originated with this hero, Takashima Yuuna, as a long-running tradition throughout the Divine Era's history, huh..."

As Tougou fondly thought about the nation's history, Fuu held her hand up to her eye in an incoherent pose and spoke:

- "I see... Yuuki Yuuna... thou hast the Yuuna Factor... You are a Yuuna..."

- "I don't get what you're saying, Onee-chan."

Everyone burst out laughing.

Tougou looked at the faded Hero Record and said

- "Someone probably hid this book for a reason..."

- "But in the end, it was found and censored. What a mischievous founder, huh. ... But from what little is left, we can still tell that the Common Era had a rough time too. We can at least know that."

The heroes of the past worried, suffered, and got hurt too-- but they probably still risked their lives to live.

Yuuna looked at her own hands.

- "The reason we have a present is because of the combined efforts of allll those people in the past, huh. ... We have to thank them."

That night-- after everyone else had finished sorting Sonoko's books and gone home.

Tougou alone remained in Sonoko's house to speak with her.

- "That Hero Record was censored in black, but there were also red censors, too. So it was probably censored twice. And the second round of censorship... erased almost all of it."

- "Which means we can conclude... just one thing, huh~"

- "Yes. The Taisha's disposition for information suppression has increased over the years."



- "The laws about protecting big secrets... must've gotten a little crooked in interpretation after a hundred~... two hundred~... three hundred~ years or so, huh... The silence on Sange is a perfect example."

300 years.

An overwhelmingly long span of time.

The "Amnesty" Taisha was built up with Uesato Hinata and Nogi Wakaba at its center. Back when they were around-- it was perhaps a more wholesome organization.

But nothing lasts forever. As generations beget generations, as time passes by, change happens.

- "Well, they did promise to talk things through properly from now on~"

- "True. Let's think of it as one step forward."

One step forward, no matter how small--

that step will become a baton for the future.

(Extra Chapter END)



